DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 091 353 SP 008 024

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TITLE Professional Preparation in Elementary School Physical Education at the University of Florida.
PUB DATE 73
NOTE 6p.

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.75 HC-$1.50 PLUS POSTAGE
DESCRIPTORS Elementary Grades; Graduate Study; *Physical Education; Preservice Education; Program Descriptions; *Teacher Education

ABSTRACT

In an effort to meet the growing need for physical education specialists, the University of Florida developed a professional preparation program which began in the winter quarter of 1973. Thirty-seven hours of upper-division professional courses are taken by all physical education majors. There are also 35 hours of core courses for prospective elementary physical education specialists. An integral part of this program is the sequential pattern of public school experiences which each student is exposed to. These experiences are arranged throughout the program in the following order: a) observe in the classroom and gymnasium, b) aid the classroom teacher and physical education specialist with clerical duties, c) assist the physical education specialist with part of the lesson, d) teach part of a physical education lesson under the supervision of the specialist, e) teach a comprehensive lesson to an entire class, and f) student-teach for 2 hours per week. That student response to the program has been positive is indicated by the fact that in just one quarter 10% of physical education students opted for the new program. (HMD)

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Professional Preparation In Elementary School Physical Education At The University of Florida

by

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SP008 074

The April 1972 National Conference on Professional Preparation of the Elementary Physical Education Specialist has signaled a new direction for those involved in curriculum planning. One point of emphasis at this conference was the identification of a growing need for thoroughly prepared elementary school specialists. Major reasons for this have been suggested by Dr. Margie Hanson.[1] She believes that our profession is now identifying those contributions which physical education can make to child development in our complex age of automation. Secondly, she notes that educators today are more cognizant of the importance of the child's total development for learning readiness. Finally, Dr. Hanson states that the early years are the most influential in child development. That is, an appetite for learning can be created, fundamental skills are easily acquired, and basic attitudes are formed for life.

In an effort to meet this growing need for specialists, the University of Florida now offers professional preparation in Elementary School Physical Education. This concentration was created by the Department of The Professional Curriculum in the College of Physical Education, Health, and Recreation and was initiated Winter Quarter, 1973.

The Elementary School Physical Education Concentration

Because the College of Physical Education, Health, and Recreation is an upper division college, students are not admitted

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[1] Mary E. Rekstad, (ed.), et. al., Promising Practices In Elementary School Physical Education. (Washington: AAHPER, 1969) P. 1.

until their general education requirements have been completed. At this point a physical education major student may elect to concentrate on the elementary or secondary level. In either event, each student is certified K-12 upon graduation.

The Two Year Curriculum

The following professional courses are taken by all physical education major students:

No.	Course	Hours
PHR 261	Individual & Family Health	5
PHR 266	First Aid & Medical Self-Help	3
PHR 345	Management of Recreation Centers	3
PHR 365	Applied Anatomy	5
PHR 366	Applied Physiology	5
PHR 371	Foundations of Physical Education	3
PHR 375	Adapted Physical Education	2
PHR 471	Administration of Phys. Educ. & Athletics	3
PHR 473	Physical Education in the Secondary School	5
PHR 545	Measurement and Evaluation	3
	Total	37

Core Courses - Elementary School Physical Education

The following core courses forms the foundation for the elementary concentration and must be taken by all prospective elementary specialists.

No.	Courses	Hours
PHR 376[I]	Physical Education Program in Elem. School	4
PHR 377	Movement Education and Gymnastics for Elementary School Children	4
PHR 378	Games and Sports for Elementary School Children	4
PHR 379	Dance for Elementary School Children	4
PHR 474	Field Experience in Elem. Phys. Education	3
EDS 405	Student Teaching in Elementary School	16
	TOTAL	35

[I]Prequisite for PHR 377, 378, 379, 474, and EDS 405

The function of PHR 376 is two-fold in that it educates the student to the unique role and scope that physical education plays in the lives of children. Secondly, emphasis is given to developing in each student a self-actualizing awareness which incorporates a sensitivity to, and respect for the needs and abilities of children.

Approximately one-third of the quarter is devoted to a public school experience.

The main thrust of courses PHR 377, 378, and 379 lies in identifying and applying those principles of teaching and learning to a wide variety of suitable physical education activities for the child.

A public school experience geared to micro-teaching comprises approximately one-half of the quarter.

The field experience, PHR 474, serves as a transitional step

to the student teaching experience. The student meets with the instructor one hour per week in a seminar and devotes a minimum of two hours per week teaching in a public school. While teaching, each student is supervised by the school physical education specialist. Thus, valuable feedback is given to the student from both the specialist and instructor.

Public School Experience

A very integral part of the program is the sequential pattern of public school experiences each student is exposed to. Beginning with pupil observation and culminating with a quarter of student teaching, each student gains personal perspective into the teaching-learning process. These experiences are sequentially arranged throughout the program in the following order:

1. classroom and gymnasium observations
2. aid the classroom teacher and physical education specialist with clerical duties
3. assist the physical education specialist with part of the lesson
4. teach part of a physical education lesson under the supervision of the specialist
5. teach a comprehensive lesson(s) to an entire class
6. student teaching

Student response to the elementary concentration has been encouraging. In just one quarter approximately ten percent of our physical education major students have elected the new program. This

tends to support our belief that this offering is helping to fulfill a professional need which, when properly implemented, can only enhance the quality of education in our elementary schools.